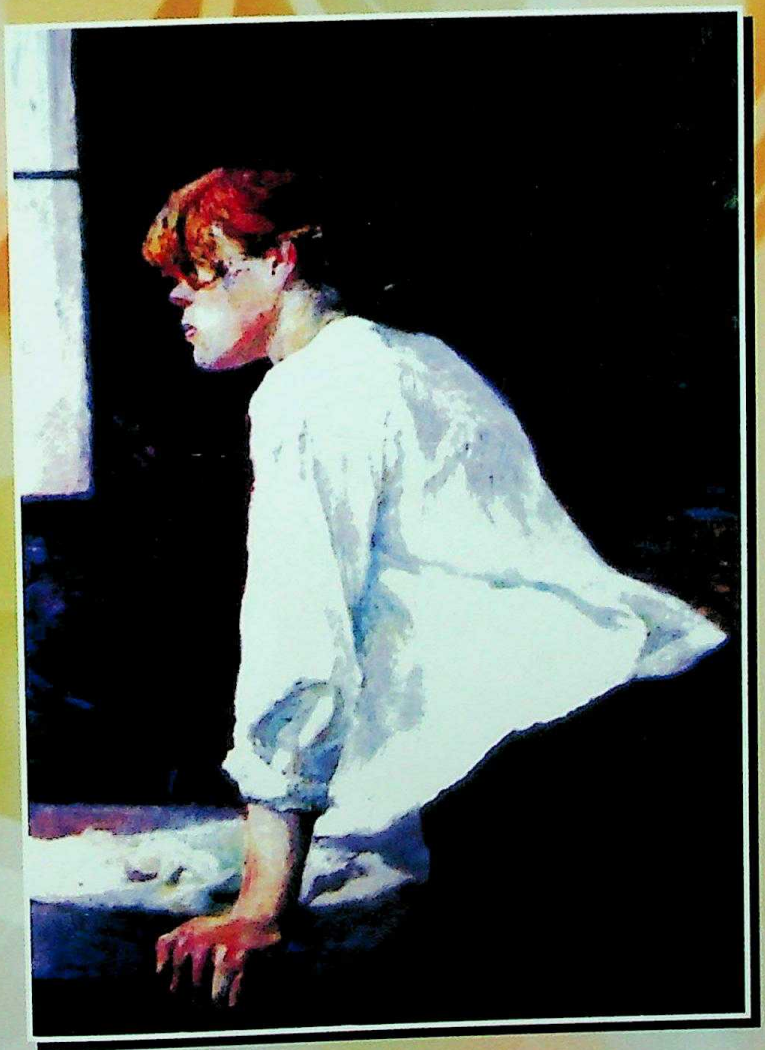
Gandhi Memorial College Of Education Bantalab Jammu

Light and Shade

Poems



Sunita Raina Pandit

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Books by Sunita Raina Pandit :

chinar kay aansoon (Hindi poetry) 1998
rihij yaad (Kashmiri poetry) 2001
sonzal (Kashmiri poetry) 2003
pot zooni vathith (Kashmiri poetry) 2004
mansar tseunum (Kashmiri poetry) 2006

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There is ice in their laughter.

Nietzsche

In every adversity of fortune, to have been happy is the most unhappy kind of misfortune.

Boethius

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To the memory of Moti Lal Saqi

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(Poems)

Translated from the Kashmiri by
Arvind Gigoo

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Translator's Note

While translating the Kashmiri lyrics of Sunita Raina Pandit into English I resorted to compression, reconstruction and recomposition. I allowed the architecture and linguistic nuances of the original to suffer. I subverted without worrying about exactness, fidelity and accuracy of equivalence. I ruined the syntax, metre and richness of the original Kashmiri. This lackluster voice is an artificial exercise in which the ineffable impact of the ghazals is lost but their soul swings and rings. This 'translation' doesn't communicate the music, rhythm, passion and transparent grace of the original.

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(1)

Friend
disappeared
and
left me a restive pulsating heart.
I had wished him
a full life
but my 'I' is the pain.

Consciousness of non existence
is
existence
My my-ness
is
nowhere.

Trust
that he honours
evaporated.
This tune
beats
your being.

I am not.

My hope
lisps
your coming.
After extinction
longing
is
intense.

***

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(2)

Tears
flowed into nothingness.
He was cold granite.
The veil
lifted
to betray
to secret.

Cherish the sensation-wound
thirsty.
Pucker the lips
to
swallow the pain
and
to live with it.
Ash drips
inside.
Smog reigns there.

The light from the lamp
during night
is
a dazzle.
The night
blackened
the heart.

He played
with
belief.

I wait.

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Correctness
was
pushed.
The treasure sank.

Dive.

The bosom
touched
the depth.

***

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(3)

From the earth
I
craved for the heavens.
The caravan of stars
walks
towards me.

I
wanted
a guard for beauty.
My heart-beat is young again.

Drink to me
face unto face.

Mind is mine.
I don't stammer.

His hand signalled
adieu
yesterday.
Today he is searching
for
the meet.

Today's birth
is
tomorrow's death.

They disgraced
him till yesterday.
Today
they mourn.
Homages!

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(4)

They shouted :
'Run away,
body and soul.'

All is right.
We shall meet again.

The new age!
The good are vile.
The seers
are
silent
and
feign ignorance.
The children
are
palsied
in the high houses.
The courtyard
has
shrunk.
The young are gagged.

What will bloom?
Lifeless wall
leans
against
lifeless wall.
A block
before air.
Impossibility

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is the cure.
Eats
and
drinks
are abundant.
A facade.

Man is the bane.
Kills.

We lost our tongues
but
spoke to the deaf.

The dumb
speak
verdicts,
the blind
see
and
the deaf
hear.

***

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(5)

I want one
to
hold may heart
to
feel the beat
to
touch may pain
to
open my chest,
to
stir me
and
mumble a song
an aubade
a serenade.

I
wore mad garments.
I
desire the speed to unrobe.

Why deck the body
and
face the mirror?
I
want your image.

The moon
the stars
and
the sun
will shadow me.

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I
want an abode
in
the sky.

The rose will bloom
and
the flowers will be shy-red.

I
want
the green for my forest.

***

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(6)

Endure
word-arrows
and
carry them.

What will you decipher?
How will you read?

Jump into the secret.
You will not go astray.
Nor will
you shrink.

You will learn
to
speak
not to perish.

You will divide
the full
and
the full
will fall in you.

Keep watch
to do
the deed.
Yours is the destiny.

You are a bedecked star.
The wind

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a failure.

I spent life swerving.

What can
deeds
bring me?

***

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(7)

Don't say: "Farewell".
We will
merge once more
for
longing is a friend.

Distance cannot distance us.
We will leave
this village
for
a rendezvous
in the city.

Looks complain.
Desire enhances.

We will meet
lip to lip.

The snow is oozing.
The cold is on the run.

The season of buds
is
near.
We will meet.

He left
without a word
and
came
without a word.
The catch line was:
"We will meet."

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(8)

Read the letter
written on water
and
speak
on the Day of judgment.

Bitterness—venom—
is for drinking.
So fill the goblet.

Change the dress
for
time is ruler.

The two
should be
the one,
Salute!

Senses will flow.
The two eyes will shut.
Hold the liquid
in
the eyes.

The heart is large
the look is stable.

What to do with the outer?
Turn day
into
evening.

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(9)

This is the trust!
The kill!
None searches for
anybody.

The beggar is the traveller.
Time
is
pain
trouble.
One moment
and
years of friendship
are
gone.
He is
plain
and
simple
and
mad
but
ready for the trouble.
The past is etched on him.
He carries water
in a willow basket
weeps blood
chases his memories
and
looks for the fountainhead
in the desert.

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Dreams rest in home.
The nights in the wilderness
are
his.

***

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(10)

I desired
full-moon-night life
without care.
I
was unable to gulp
bitterness
and
sped.

I was sleepy.
He said:
'Dream is short.
Truth is peppery.'

The ocean will not
stop.
The drops' hope of
existence
is
limitless.
The living wind will
merge
with the drops.

Void enters void.

Memory is devastation.
Coming is continuity.
I
craved for the life of a tramp.
Now
I am the tramp.

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with
your soul
as trust.

I want your looks to travel
through
the veil.

Body alone is.

I gave nothing
to
the act
and
the effect.

I asked and lived.

Quench the thirst
and
make me
a rose.

***

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(11)

He entered the reverie
that cheated him
into
an illusion.
The night-rest
fled
from him.
Leisure!
He lost living.

He chiselled the diamond
not
for himself.
His throbs
are
his passion.
He
passed though life
saving.
Authentic frenzy
was
his share.

Did the dust
settle on
consciousness?

He left all
for
he wanted to collect
in sloth.

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He gambled
my joys.
What was his
winning?

***

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(12)

His satisfaction
was
the explanation.

The source of consciousness
is
not sweet.
He who lapped
spleen
was freed.

We
caressed
the sickle of time
and
the anguish of the moment .

All had been rooted out.

The tongue
is
the culprit.
Reliance is tainted.

Who ousted us?
Do they remember us?

Silence
dumbness
are
his fate.
His excuse is his joy.

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(13)

Emptiness inside
is
inside truth.
He doesn't look
into
the mirror.

Tossed by the whitecap
he looks for
the guide to the ultimate
He is a carder
of the woven.
He doesn't know
the result.
The killer of the meaning.

Can't take
for
the thali is curved.

Thought
the murderer
enters untimely
in the dark .
Doors and windows
are
inside.
I want
feet to stand upon
the earth.
I want
the short journey of

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going
and
coming.

Know the height of
knowledge.
The measuring rod
is
wrong.

***

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(14)

If the look
journeys,
if eagerness
solves,
the breaths
are
at stake
are
trapped.
Liberation will happen.

If he stops at the second step
the closed eyes
will be the trust.

Sundown
is
on way.
I
wish him
to come.

If I ask him:
'What is maddening spring?'
he will be
restless.

I took nothing
from him.
That is vice.

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I
carried the load—
merciless always—
otherwise
man would not be man.

***

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(15)

Come and sit.
I will unlid my heart
present wounded memories
and
show you the gaps.

My heart caught fire
and
you darted.

Forget all.

The two pearled lines
flow
on the face.

Some day
I will lose
the way.
And you
will search for me.
Your eyes
will freeze
into a wait.

My longings
burnt
to ash.
Who did you dream?
What is bloom?

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Listen ,
you will revisit
the forgotten childhood.

***

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(16)

I picked up the sword- pen
to
identify
and
preserve the sign.
It was a rebellion of words.

Weak imagination
and
false courage.
A miracle!

Writing is famine.
I
store in the chill
for the nailed time.

The breezy day
did not happen
for
leisure-words.

The roar
is
the thirsty source.

We are saving trust.
I am the trust.

***

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(17)

The effect of spring
is
autumn.
The defect of seasons!

Wind –
the enemy of the bird.
Stone –
the home of the bulbul.
Koel's song –
far from the garden.

Was it strangulation?

Our consolation
is
our scattered pieces
our destiny.
Untrue!

He foresaw this
unsuspecting.

My land is
nameless.
My look is
the flight.

***

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(18)

My word is not
apt.
The evening of the city is not
apt.

The house is empty.

The walls of the cube are not
apt.
The dream is not
apt.
The child of thought is not
apt.

Better to crouch
in
the corner.
The sign
is
defiled.

My bow shoots
NOTHING.

Are you the change?

The conceit of madness
is
dim.
The effect of the drink
is
NOTHING.

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(19)

The mystic shouted:
'Blood will be water.
Water will be blood.'

Your madness
is
my faith.

You are the past truth.

Your vision
is
your long tongue.
Your are lone-madness
from
the skies.

None
is
before
or
after.

You live in
non-delusion
non-this
non-impurity.

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(20)

The spring is aflame.
Sorrowful .
I don't nourish
the pain of the city.
Miniature shelter
is
my miniature comfort
in
silence.
I don't worry for home
in
house.

Who envies your bigness?
I
am
the worry of existence.
Your promised coming
is
alive.
Your wait
is
non-worry.

My look
sat
on the flowers
impervious
to the garden.

Inner beauty
is

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the cause.
I felt the foot
silent
and
unattended.

Pleading is not my concern.

***

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(21)

Imagination ran amok
to see
the silvery moon.
Sleep died
in
restiveness
and
sad consciousness.

Mind is
jumpy
cheat
deaf.

Solitude whispered :
'Tear off heart.'
I obeyed
and
shy dawn fell.
The candle burnt.
The moth danced
into
the flame
and
was still.

The valued burn was sacrifice.
They knighted me
with lunacy.

In fancy
I am

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the 'he'
and
the 'I'.

The faceless time
is
not yours
is
not mine.
Benediction will not work
before
the appointed time.

***

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(22)

He
is
unaware of pain
or
a stoic.
His broken wings
flutter.

Fall
is
not his worry.
He
has not
mouthed his wound.

Consciousness is gripped
and
awareness is blocked.

Tactful behavior!

He drank poison
drop
after
drop.

For him
day is moment
year is month.

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(23)

Evening of solitude
came
galloped
and vanished.

The dawn is the new messenger.
I
can't laugh at your will.
I
can't live at my will.

Childhood-dust
is
my covering.

They said:
'You are an adult now.'

We are the fragments
since
separation.
This living doesn't
suit.

The game with the doll
threw me
into instant growth.
The dream
is
nakedness of truth.

It was wonderment

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when
he came with dripping eyes
and
said his story.
The speechless
met me in the lane
and
engraved the tale
on the wall.

Evening is on time.

***

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(24)

You can't catch me
tomorrow
for
I am a dream.
Reach me
a full day
and then
show me the way.

I want a pause
to do
the deed.

I game him the rose
but
I thirst for fragrance.

The rose
is
fulfillment
that I
sculpted
festooned
and
then hid.

Today
she is to be unveiled.
I
will mix in you
call you.
Don't torment me.

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(25)

Give me a crimson
tipsy look
and
the hearted tavern
without fear.

Desires
flower
in the hidden heart.

Don't wet your eyes
for
the festivities are aglow.
Speak out
the word.

Sloth thrives here.
Shake them
into doing.

A stream
will dance down the hill.
Drink
death-drink.
Hand over the truth
to
the future.
Keep it
for the morrow.

***

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(26)

Don't push the right
for someone else.
Don't fall
if
you see them
journey
and
rise.
Don't look into
my-time mirror.

The wise are the losers.
The ninny are every-time deaf.

Happiness fells
sorrow.
You are the life
and
the breath.
Don't die
before death.

Scan the ether
with
the feet grounded in earth.

Don't imagine
a typhoon.

***

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(27)

I sang into lightness
and
forgot the gash.
My share
was
the lone way.

I concealed the feel.

Joy is not the alms.

I unknotted the votive thread.

I am no hermit
to live on a fistful of
rice.

I ground my 'I'
and
offered all to
the ten.

I am the wait.

I bejewelled my feel
under
the full moon.

The yellow rote is terror
I changed the garment.

***

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(28)

Lost!
Is this a city?
The dry closed eyes are a failure.

Life is wayward.

Name the city.
My sorrow .
It is
if it has clasped its soul.
How much has the city
to see?

The pain
and
the tongue
are
bitter.

Can I see the city
when
I utter sorrow?

The tarred road is silent.
So much has happened
to
the city.

Can it say so much?
(I am the story.)
When it names me

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questions arise.
Will the city
sing my ballad?

***

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(29)

Watch
my coming
and
its meaning.
I don't announce
my arrival.

The night gathers
lost things.

He remembers
the morning dream.
Separation
is
his lunacy.

He did not watch
my tallness .
He has the sky
to looks at.

The silent look
is
my fear.
He weighs my
thankfulness.
For him
truth
is arsenic.
He wants the drink.

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He left home

with 'I' in mind.
His lips quiver
for
I am.
Look.

***

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(30)

Man's wisdom lips:
'All is destiny.'

Man
bellows
opposites.

The picture of the palanquin
is
a haze.

Let us sing
at random .

The bride of yesterday shouted:
'I don't adorn myself all days.
It happens only
once.'

Sold
and
got money.
Existence is a maze.
We go on filling
without rest.

Who does man fear?
Where can that man
find
man each day?

***

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(31)

Stop,
lest one is lost.
Stop,
lest one repents.

Incite.
Wash the chest.
Enter the 'I'.
The secret will ooze
and
flow.

He will beat his head
against
a stone.
Stop.

Stop,
that hut is home.
Some soul rests in peace.
Support was yours
hardships are his.

Mothers bade farewell
in
the courtyards.
The doors are strangers.
Stop.

The look showered
love
and

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whispered:
'Hope someone will stop.'
Stop.

The verse is hanging
from
the edge of the garment
to
liberate all.

Stop.

***

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(32)

Wax melted into wax.
The dot inside
vanished.

The beam
pierced 'I'
and
'I' saw.
The 'I' saw the 'I'
and
left.
Heard the thud of footsteps
and
saw the face
in the look.

He
clothed in muslin
arrived
with the matted hair.

Is he in the courtyard?

He played a child's play
and
left .
I looked for him
through the chinks
of the windows.

It was a mirage—
a remembrance.

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I saw him
in fancy.

I am not the woman from the baker's oven.

***

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(33)

This is a city of
the frenzied.
This is a city of
the crazy.

The ruler is a maniac
and
counts crematoria.

They don't rest
in
the shade.
It started with
the fright of the wind.

Once
there was a city here.
There are no signs now.
There is no repentence.
Yearning weeps blood.

The wise
are
birds that do not nibble
what-is-for-man.

***

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(34)

The tune happened
outside
and
inside .
I felt the secret.
I lost wits because of
the sign.

The balloon flew
and
I mistook illusion
shadow.

I stored
intoxication
in heart.

The pearl-bracelet –
around his wrist.
The flower-necklace
around his face.
The silky hair is flowing.
The image of moon
is
on the brow.
The tune from the flute
tumbles
from lips.
I stored intoxication.

He is the friend of
the beginning.

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The love-flame is hidden.
All is
cool
and
cold
and
attractive.

He is the crutch.
He stirred my spring
and
lent tune to my note

Flowers bloomed
out of time
in the dead winter.

I sat to catch him
and
looked for him .

My tune is your tune.
Step slowly.
I am
the embellished lunacy.

I am
because
this is.

The meet will happen.

***

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(35)

Trust out of season!
This is the right season.
We are the slaves.
Be
tomorrow
and
today.

Death is step.
Don't deviate.
Count men.
Think of man
the right man.
the pure man.

The buds will not emerge.

Sculpt
a new season
a new wages.

Architect
a new trust
a new faith.

Words are not clothed
in
celestial light.

The mirror
is
the truth.
Endure.

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(36)

Here
joy is ours.
This is the new bright world.

He will hope
for the stoppage.
What? !
This is
chimera.

Do we come
to go?
Pray for a short duree.

All is speed.

Fate?
Is this our own?
Stolen.

He is the blame.

Man is superimposition.

Don't pinpoint
con men
for
I am one.

***

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(37)

I said:
'There is no cure.
You have them for destruction.'

I said:
'Speech is banned.
Why blame the pen?'

I said:
'The tenant is touchy.
I loaf in my home.'

I said:
'Is the flame for the dancing moth?'

I said:
'Illnesses will diminish.
Does man forget the word?'

I said:
'How long will good actions last?'

***

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(38)

I am the desire
and
the preserver of
the otherness of heart.

A serpent is coiled
in a bowl.
The sea too is there.

I don't play upon
the outside-instrument now
My inside
is
the soundless sound.

I have no
moments
days
months.
The cold in the years
is
safe.

I set the house
on fire.
Inside is locked
safe.

The pen broke.
The paper was pieces.
I couldn't write.
The mark of the ink
is
there.

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(39)

This is justified injustice.
What next?
The blame
is
on us.
We are the blemish.
The sky is beneath
our feet.
Face is
bronze
brass.

The knowers of
the cause and effect
defame me.

The chest opened
to the will of the people.
Blamed the wounds.
What else?

Epoch is failed history.
What?
We are the forgotten.
All is upside down.

***

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(40)

Laugh
to entertain
to show your presence.
If you don't laugh
wear
a laugher's mask.

No need of happiness
to laugh.

Laugh
to hide
to conceal .

Laugh
when the machine attacks
mind.
Show
that the heart throbs.

You are alone in multitude.

Laugh
to make others
shed tears.

We
laugh laughs
to digest
to stomach.

***

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(41)

The appreciators
have changed
their looks.

Everything is enmeshment.

He said:
'Truth will be your prison.'
I said:
'Will truth sink?'

What will you ask for
if
you raise your hands?
And for whom?

Desire is impure.
There is no talk of
peace
and
comfort.
There is no oneness in
thought.

He is a prisoner.
There is no exit.
Man s strength has shrunk to
a dot.

***

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(42)

This is the symptom
of your living.
Carve your craziness
into a wonder.
Old soul
is
new body.
Mind is demolition.
Preserve the flaming heart.
Make it think.
Grind,
pass it through sieve
and
then heat it.
Invite him to redemption.
You talk of the two eyes.
I
will sacrifice for us.
Enter
for the waters of Sheshnag
will wash you.
Evil can't affect the one
who is above.
I will hide you
in
my eyes.

***

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(43)

He found the word
and
got is-ness.
Poison
become
nectar.
My breath
is
agony.
He lived joy.
I rested
contempt in my eyes
and
ate the uneatable.
The hermit
focuses
on his body.
Many for him
wait
and
do.
Home is meditation—
superior to the hermit.
Your past deeds
are
ripe fruits
for all.

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(44)

You want to
adorn the sky
with pearls?
You can't reach.
The reason ?
Mind .
Pass through my heart.
You want to die
after living the legend of life.

I entreat you—
Stitch
and
cover the holes of the clothes.

Your life is my boon
my happiness.
You are
the opposite.

Thoughts dissatisfy
the suffering.
Face
attack
and
live my sorrow.

You can't bloom
into
a flower .
Live the fragrance
of the rose.

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(45)

I counted the night
moment to moment
and
spent it in darkness.
I said:
'Moon, I don't need the light.'

I felt Krishna coming
and
turned night
into a bride.

They said:
'He is the sun.'

I spent blackness
through open eyes.
Darkness left in deceil
I
spread the night.

Midas touched the threshold.
Stars
shone on the steps
for him to come
for me to see.
He smiled
inside
and
I
passed the night to the stars.

***

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(46)

We will write sweet.
We will write sour too.

Pain is not the indicator of pain.
It is meaning .

At times
the defiled is pure.
Recall Shobri.

He imagines
his bigness.
The search for wisdom
was
his waste.

Protect
the feel of my purity.
His thinking is a straight line.

Heart dangles from the beat.
It is not fear
but
necessasity.

Sita suffers.
We will write
about Rama's going.

The hundred cities are yours.
Renunciation is mine.

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(47)

They will surely read.
The age will
point towards me.

The pen- arrow
hit the forget.

I am
the innocence of simplicity.
I did not
barter words.
They want my
extinct body.

I question :
'How will the children be?'

Each word
is
your image.
Deliverance is yours.
Words
and
thoughts
are one.
Who is the master?
Does anyone breathe here?

***

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(48)

The flowers said:
'We will be the beauty for you.
Splay
before you face
blackness at noon."

The flowers
lipped my feet
and
shook.
I did not look askance.

The Dal shimmers
the pearls shine on the lotuses
the moon plays hide and seek
with the stars
the waters of the river
merge with the lake
and
gaze at the sky.

I stepped forward
without care
without stop
and
thought of home.
Tomorrow
the New Year will meet me.

Mother will hug
grandmother will offer
yellow rice.

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I did not look askance.

People spoke fire.
Shock fell upon me
for
I couldn't find home.

My look danced around.
Heart cleaved.

I did not look askance.

***

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(49)

I walked
songs
and
guesses
and
entered the city.

I said to a bird:
'Sing spring.'
I wiped the blood
from the flowers
and said:
'Gardener, be.'

I said to the neighbourly friend:
'Walk history thoughtfully.'

The dream-nest of the bulbul
rests
in the crotch.

We will sit and talk
in the shade .
The young have to listen
to the santoor
and
the old have to restart.

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(50)

I will test my
unhidden young heart.
The eye does not see the eye
for
the rapport is gone.

The sight
that was watery
is
dry.

I will test
because
I don't trust.
I will treasure
joy and solace
for you.
I love my pain
for you.

I bore
the flash of lightning.
I saw
the dark .
I came out
of the grindstone.
What more to suffer?
Am I
for the fire
in each epoch?
I will jump into the baker's oven.

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Will the hunger go
when
the stone is washed?
Shall I
touch the heights of
the woman-mystic?

Long ago
I pulled the boat
with
a thread.
I shall change
the course of the river.

***

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(51)

I want an excuse
to forget.
We want a seer
the right moment
the awakened world.

Faith is on fire.
The one word
is
missing.
The touchstone is rust.

He is in
agony.
I want a tale
to connect
to him.

I want
one look
one face
one thought.
The dip in Sheshnag
doesn't
cleanse
doesn't
purify.

I want
the reflecting heart.
I want
words drinking madness.
I want
you — a host

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(52)

Define the direction of
the river
the ocean.
You are
the soul
deathlessness
friend.
What
when I perish?
Will any hermit come?
Can ash cure ailment?
Usher me into
growth
strength
rising.
My breath has
aim.

He will question me on
the day.
I see the effect of the good
because
the vicious are.

They shouldered water
because
the pitcher broke.
Are they daughters?

***

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(53)

The thought flew
beyond the horizon.
How can you
handle it?

This sound
is
the heart
the unbridled horse.

The moments
squeeze
or
weave dreams.
Store with feeling
for
he is.

Imagination
plays with sorrow
sings pain.

Everything is the same—
no sorrow
no joy.

We will pray for the lamp
at sundown.
The moth is still.

There is a fair
today

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or
tomorrow.
The confidants will meet.

We spoke out the seen.
The eyes – witnesses.
Didn't moralize.
Just listened.

***

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(54)

The thought
is
on wings.
You can't grip it.

Consciousness is a rough edge.

He gave me
the distinction
between
this and that.
What to do
with
'this is'
and
'this is not'?

You have the word –
life on lip.
I have the pen.
Did you get it?
They don't.

You are
wise
to count your actions.
I put my actions
into the seive.

Is this action?

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I
didn't ask for
the sun
the starry sky
and
the moon.

I asked for a prayer.
Denial?
Giver,
give and lose nothing.

Is the one
who asks at the door
an underling?

***

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(55)

Time is the change.
Attitude is the change.
Faces are no-faces.

They spat at history.
Scribes replaced
words.

Faces are —
This is no copper.
In the eye
the lingo
is
a stranger.

They look away my 'is'
and
denied to me
'mine'.

The flame is.
The river tried to
put it out.
Even the fire
is
a stranger.

The city
is
the shameful gestures
of
my theatrical people

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Sunita Raina Pandit

Sunita Raina Pandit was born in 1967 in the Anantnag district of Kashmir. She took to writing at an early age. She did BA from the University of Kashmir and Post-graduate Diploma in Teaching/ Education and Diploma in Educational Management and Administration from the Model Institute of Education and Research, Jammu. She has written one book of verse in Hindi and four books of Ghazals in Kashmiri. She is a homemaker. She lives in Shalimar Garden in UP (India).

She can be contacted at
Cell: 011-9891325387
Email: s.ghazal1@yahoo.in.

The fifty-five poems in this anthology touch love, longing, pain, separation, union, hope, despair, past memory, friendship, exile, human relationship, nature, spirituality, loneliness, etc.

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